



In the United States Patent and Trademark Office

Applicant: Donald E. Govoni et al.) Examiner:
Serial No.: not yet assigned) Group Art Unit:
Date Filed: September 22, 2003) Paper No.

For: METHOD OF PREPARING A SYNTHETIC FUEL FROM COAL

CERTIFICATE OF MAILING

37 C.F.R. 1.10

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Denise Ellison 9/22/03

PETITION TO MAKE SPECIAL UNDER 37 C.F.R. § 1.102(c)

Box DAC
Commissioner for Patents
P. O. Box 1450
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Sir:

PETITION

Applicant hereby petitions to make this application special. The basis for such special status is that the invention will materially contribute to the development of energy resources as set forth in 37 C.F.R. § 1.102(c). No fee is required.

STATEMENT

Michael B. Martin, an attorney registered to practice before the Office, being hereby warned that willful false statements and the like so made are punishable by fine or imprisonment, or both, under Section 1001 of Title 18 of the United States Code and that such willful false statements may jeopardize the validity of this document, hereby declares that:

1. Coal is the origin of more than 50% of the electricity generated in the United States today. With technological advancement, demand for electricity has grown 148% over the last three decades and is projected to increase another 42% by 2020. *2002 Master Resource Book – Coal-Based Generation Issues and Facts*, Coal-Based Generation Stakeholders Group (2002).
2. Coal is also our largest and most affordable domestic fuel source. The U.S. has 250 years of recoverable coal reserves (276 billion tons), which is 39 and 54 times the domestic reserves of natural gas and oil, respectively. *Id.* It is critical to our economy and energy security as a nation that this valuable resource be fully exploited while controlling the effect of its recovery and utilization on surrounding land and air quality and water supplies. Full and efficient use of this resource is the key objective of the subject patent application, along with the concurrent reduction of our dependence on imported energy sources.
3. A recent study of the coal industry estimated that perhaps more than 2 billion tons of fine coal refuse resides in waste ponds in the United States. Additionally, 5 to 10% of the new coal mined in the eastern U.S. today is discarded, adding more millions of tons of such waste (“middling” coal) to often already full impoundments. This waste, made of Btu values comparable in many cases to newly mined low sulfur Powder River Basin coals, imposes significant environmental and handling problems. Once placed in disposal sites near the mine, undesirable water-soluble species can leach out and contaminate the water supplies in the immediate vicinity. Additional environmental problems such as iron oxide formation and acid mine drainage may also add more indirect cost to energy production.

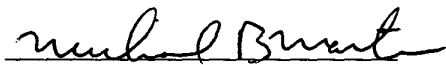
4. The production of synthetic fuels as described in this patent application provides an opportunity for such coal waste to be recovered and productively blended with higher Btu coals and successfully burned in power plants. Furthermore, the creation of synthetic fuel from coal fines using this technology improves the handling characteristics of the fines without introducing any additional pollutants or raising the levels that already present in normal coal feedstock, an important aspect of fossil fuel energy generation.

5. Accordingly, the present patent application is directed to an invention that materially contributes to the development of energy resources as set forth in M.P.E.P. § 708.02 VI.

6. All statements made herein of his own knowledge are true and all statements made on information and belief are believed to be true.

Consideration of this Petition is respectfully requested.

Respectfully Submitted,



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Date: 9/22/03